

1. A method for identifying a calling party to a called party before the called party answers a call, the method comprising:

receiving an origination message;

receiving biometric information regarding the calling party;

5 using the biometric information to access an identity database record of the calling party;

retrieving identity information regarding the calling party from the identity database; and

10 transmitting an MSC\_Network Origination message including the identity information retrieved from the identity database.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving an origination message comprises:

15 receiving an origination message including the biometric information, thereby receiving the biometric information.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

20 transmitting a request for the biometric information to user equipment of the calling party.

4. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving biometric information regarding the calling party comprises:

receiving retinal scan data.

25 5. The method of claim 1 wherein receiving biometric information regarding the calling party comprises:

receiving facial recognition data.

30 6. The method of claim 1 wherein using the biometric information to access an identity database record of the calling party comprises:

extracting identifying parameters from the biometric information; and

using the extracted identifying parameters as a key or index into the identification database to access an identity database record of the calling party.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
determining that the called party subscribes to a biometric information  
based caller ID feature.

5 8. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
receiving one or more spoken words; and  
using information in the one or more spoken words in combination with  
the biometric information to access the identity database.

10 9. The method of claim 8 wherein using information in the spoken name  
in combination with the biometric information to access the identity database  
comprises:

converting the one or more spoken words into one or more text words;  
and

15 using the one or more text words and the biometric information as one  
or more keys or indexes into the identification database to access an identity  
database record of the calling party.

20 10. A system operative to identify a calling party to a called party before  
the called party answers a call, the system comprising:

an identity database accessible at least in part through the use of  
biometric data, the identity database including identifying records in association with  
respective biometric data;

25 a switching center operative to receive biometric information regarding  
a calling party and use the received biometric information to access the identity  
database to retrieve identity information therefrom and to generate and transmit an  
MSC\_Network Origination message including the identity information.

30 11. The system of claim 11 wherein the switching center is operative to  
receive retinal scan information as the biometric data.

12. The system of claim 11 further comprising:  
a piece of communications equipment adapted to collect retinal scan  
information and transmit the retinal scan information to the switching center.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein the piece of communications equipment is adapted to collect the retinal scan information from a user of the piece of communications equipment each time a call is to be placed and to transmit the retinal scan information as part of a Mobile Origination message.

14. The system of claim 12 wherein the piece of communications equipment is adapted to collect the retinal scan information from a user of the piece of communications equipment upon receiving a request for retinal scan information from the switching center.

15. The system of claim 10 wherein the switching center is operative to receive facial image data as the biometric data and wherein the system further comprises:

a piece of communications equipment adapted to collect and transmit facial image information to the switching center each time a call is to be placed and to transmit the facial image information as part of a Mobile Origination message.

16. The system of claim 10 wherein the switching center is operative to receive facial image data as the biometric information and wherein the system further comprises:

a piece of communications equipment adapted to collect facial image information from a user of the piece of communications equipment upon receiving a request for facial image information from the switching center.

17. The system of claim 10 wherein the switching center is operative to receive raw biometric data and to parameterize the raw biometric data for use as a key or index into the identity database.

18. The system of claim 10 wherein the switching center is operative to receive parameterized biometric data from a piece of user equipment used by the calling party and to use the parameterized biometric data for as a key or index into the identity database.

19. A system for identifying a calling party to a called party before the called party answers a call, the system comprising:

means for receiving an origination message;

means for receiving biometric information regarding the calling party;

5 means for using the biometric information to access an identity database record of the calling party;

means for retrieving identity information regarding the calling party from the identity database; and

10 means for transmitting an MSC\_Network Origination message including the identity information retrieved from the identity database.

20. The system of claim 19 wherein the means for receiving an origination message comprises:

15 means for receiving an origination message including the biometric information, thereby including the means for receiving the biometric information.

21. The system of claim 19 further comprising:

means for transmitting a request for the biometric information to user equipment of the calling party.

22. The system of claim 19 wherein the means for receiving biometric information regarding the calling party comprises:

means for receiving retinal scan data.

25 23. The system of claim 19 wherein the means for receiving biometric information regarding the calling party comprises:

means for receiving facial recognition data.

30 24. The system of claim 19 wherein the means for using the biometric information to access an identity database record of the calling party comprises:

means for extracting identifying parameters from the biometric information; and

means for using the extracted identifying parameters as a key or index into the identification database to access an identity database record of the calling party.

5           25.    The system of claim 19 further comprising:

              means for determining that the called party subscribes to a biometric information based caller ID feature.

              26.    The system of claim 19 further comprising:

10               means for receiving one or more spoken words; and

              means for using information in the one or more spoken words in combination with the biometric information to access the identity database.

              27.    The system of claim 26 wherein the means for using information in the  
15 spoken name in combination with the biometric information to access the identity database comprises:

              means for converting the one or more spoken words into one or more text words; and

              means for using the one or more text words and the biometric  
20 information as one or more keys or indexes into the identification database to access an identity database record of the calling party.